

LSD-25 Being Sold On Black Market

A black market now exists in LSD-25, a powerful drug capable of causing hallucinations, two Los Angeles physicians reported in the July 14 *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Drs. Sidney Cohen and Keith S. Ditman said the recent appearance of the drug as an item of underworld traffic is "an alarming development."

Now that the drug has become available from sources concerned solely with the profits from illicit sales, they said, physicians may encounter patients in a state of LSD intoxication. The dangers asso-

ciated with misuse of the drug include suicide, prolonged psychotic reactions and antisocial behavior, they said.

There is illicit trade in LSD tablets, ampules and saturated sugar cubes, they said.

Some persons who take marihuana also take LSD and hold "LSD parties," they said.

"Occasional catastrophic reactions can be anticipated from such casual, unattended use," the two physicians warned.

The visual and mental distortions caused by the drug can be "a devastating experience" without the "saving knowledge" that they are drug-induced and temporary, they said. It is "not unlikely" that self-destruction or psychotic reactions may follow such an experience, they said.

Accidental ingestion of the drug by individuals who are unaware of its nature has already occurred, the authors said. A child who inadvertently consumed a drug-saturated sugar cube remained partially disoriented a month later, they said.

Addiction to LSD-25 has not yet been observed, they said. However, they said, a "new but not rare" type of multihabitation is appearing in which persons frequently indulge in a variety of stimulants, narcotics, sedatives, and hallucination-producing drugs, including LSD.

One patient, who said she and her "beat" friends regularly take one or another of eight different kinds of drugs, claimed that withdrawal symptoms for any single drug do not occur, they said.

LSD's ability to produce hallucinations was discovered 20 years ago, the physicians said. Since that time, nearly 1,000 articles have been published on the drug, they said. However, they said, the manufacturers have refused to introduce the drug commercially until its side effects are more precisely determined.

At the present time, LSD-25 is distributed only to those who wish to engage in scientific investigations, the authors said. Properly used the drug may aid in the study of mental processes, they said.

"Its ability to induce a 'model psychosis' makes it an excellent laboratory device for the study of psychotic-like phenomena," they said. "LSD-25 has also been employed as an adjunct to psychotherapy because recall of repressed memories is enhanced and ego defensiveness to conflict-laden material is reduced."

The authors are affiliated with the Veterans Administration Hospital and the University of California Medical Center.

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